Today, the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) Board of Education passed the resolution, “Ensuring a Complete Count of the Los Angeles Unified School District Communities, Families, and Students in the 2020 Census” (RES-066-18/19). The Alliance for a Better Community developed this resolution in partnership with the City of Los Angeles, the County of Los Angeles, LAUSD, and other partners to help ensure that the District’s communities, families, and students are represented in the 2020 United States Census and receive critical services and supports across education, crime prevention, health care, and transportation. The resolution was sponsored by LAUSD Board President Mónica García, Board Vice President Nick Melvoin, and Board Member Kelly Gonez.

A PricewaterhouseCoopers study found that California missed out on at least $1.5 billion in federal funds due to uncounted residents in the 2000 Census. There will be critical implications for the State of California, Los Angeles County, and LAUSD with billions more in federal aid at risk of being lost due to an undercount of residents. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, every LAUSD Board District is home to populations that are most frequently undercounted including children under six, youth, immigrants, renters, homeless populations, and those with limited-English proficiency.

As an organization committed to the prosperity of the Latino and Los Angeles community, ABC strongly supports partnerships and the coordination of resources to maximize complete count efforts of LAUSD families.

Gabriella Barbosa, Director of Policy and Legislative Advocacy of ABC spoke in support of the resolution: “The school board’s adoption of this resolution will serve as an innovative model of collaboration across the state and nation and will hopefully influence other school districts, cities, and counties to work together to ensure a complete count of our most underrepresented families.”

In addition, the potential addition of a citizenship question on the 2020 Census Questionnaire has created an environment of fear and distrust in immigrant communities. For this reason, the role of schools and school districts as trusted messengers of the census is critical. The LAUSD resolution will integrate census efforts with the District’s “We Are One L.A. Unified: Standing with Immigrant Families” campaign as well as other efforts that directly connect with hard to count families.

“More than $76.7 billion in federal funds are distributed annually to California on the basis of the Census data,” said Giovany Hernandez, Regional Census Campaign Manager of the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO) Educational Fund. “As the state’s largest school district, it is critical that LAUSD and our communities receive their fair share of these resources. That’s why when Latinos are counted in the Census, everyone wins - people of color, working families, and all Californians.”

ABC firmly believes that a complete count in the 2020 Census is fundamental to a fair and representative democracy. The school board’s adoption of this resolution is an important step in the nation's second largest school district doing its part to ensure a complete count of our most underrepresented families.
Thank you to the Advancement Project, The Mayor’s Office, The Weingart Foundation, LA County Chief Executive Office, NALEO Educational Fund, and the U.S. Census Bureau who provided support and testimonies during today’s board meeting.